

maintaining that house is maybe 10 or 15 or \$20 lower, that can go to a mortgage payment rather than to the electric bill. So building from the ground up is very important.

Those are things that we can encourage and do through government. We have got to increase supply, no question about that, in order to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. The gentleman mentioned it, and I think it is worth repeating, 55 percent of America's oil comes from outside the United States. The fastest growing supplier of oil to America, and the number six supplier to America, is Iraq.

Most folks do not know that Saddam Hussein probably has more impact on American gas prices than any of us would wish to admit. I noticed an article in the paper on Monday, they are reconsidering sanctions on Iraq. And not a surprise, every time they do that at the United Nations, Iraq decides that it is going to turn off its spigot and tell the rest of the world that they have us by the short hairs. I do not want to be by the short hairs with Saddam Hussein, which means we need to reduce our foreign dependence on single sources of supply so that when one individual dictator says, Well, I'm turning off the spigot, we have other sources, we are not over a barrel, that our energy policy is not just going on bended knee to other governments and begging for oil. That is not a policy. That is a plea. We should not put ourselves in that situation.

So we have got to have conservation, we have got to have exploration, we have got to build our infrastructure and take care of some of the infrastructure problems that we have, and we need real government reform. I think that that is the recipe for a stable, long-term policy for energy independence in this country. I appreciate the gentleman's efforts to bring this session to the House.

Mr. EHLERS. That was an excellent summary of what we have been trying to convey this evening. I thank the gentlewoman from New Mexico for her comments.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2216, and that the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations also may insert tabular data and other extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLAKE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 877 AND H.R. 1198

Mr. TOWNS (during the special order of Mr. EHLERS). Mr. Speaker, I ask

unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 877 and H.R. 1198.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLAKE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD, WEST VIRGINIAN OF THE CENTURY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge West Virginia Day, at least for the 1 hour left in today, and the West Virginian of the Century, U.S. Senator ROBERT C. BYRD, whose accomplishments will last forever. 138 years ago, on June 20, 1863, West Virginia became the 35th State in the Union. Over those 138 years, our State has been blessed with many great statesmen and women, but last month at the State capitol in Charleston, Senator ROBERT C. BYRD was appropriately honored as West Virginian of the Century by a proclamation from our West Virginia Governor, Bob Wise, and resolutions from the West Virginia House of Delegates and the West Virginia Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the remarks of Senator BYRD on that occasion.

REMARKS BY SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD, "WEST VIRGINIAN OF THE 20TH CENTURY," MAY 31, 2001

West Virginia, how I love you!
Every streamlet, shrub and stone,
Even the clouds that flit above you
Always seem to be my own.

Your steep hillsides clad in grandeur,
Always rugged, bold and free,
Sing with ever swelling chorus:
Montani, Semper, Liberi!

Always free! The little streamlets,
As they glide and race along,
Join their music to the anthem
And the zephyrs swell the song.

Always free! The mountain torrent
In its haste to reach the sea,
Shouts its challenge to the hillsides
And the echo answers "FREE!"

Always free! Repeats the river
In a deeper, fuller tone
And the West wind in the treetops
Adds a chorus all its own.

Always Free! The crashing thunder,
Madly flung from hill to hill,
In a wild reverberation
Makes our hearts with rapture fill.

Always free! The Bob White whistles
And the whippoorwill replies,
Always free! The robin twitters
As the sunset gilds the skies.

Perched upon the tallest timber,
Far above the sheltered lea,
There the eagle screams defiance
To a hostile world: "I'm free!"

And two million happy people,
Hearts attuned in holy glee,
Add the hallelujah chorus:

"Mountaineers are always free!"

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, Governor Wise, my fellow West Virginians, ladies and gentlemen:

Now in my 84th year, I look back over the ups and downs of a long and full and active life. I see a vastly changed world from what it was when I walked the dirt roads of Wolf Creek Hollow in Mercer County and studied in a two-room schoolhouse. The nation has grown from 102 million when I was born in 1917 to the burgeoning population of 275 million people today. At the beginning of my life, the nation was still in its horse-and-buggy days. Now we are in the age of instant communications, the Internet, jet-propelled planes, inter-planetary exploration, medical miracles, and the highest standard of living that the world has ever known.

We live in a country whose greatness seems to have been foreordained by her fortunate geography and rich natural resources, her agreeable and temperate climate, and by the hardy and industrious race of men and women who hewed her forests, cultivated her fields, bridged her rivers, built her cities, and created the American Dream that has excited the envy and won the admiration of mankind around the globe. How blessed we are to have inherited this pearl of great price! And how thankful we should be to the provident hand of that Omnipotent Being, who has favored our undertakings from the pre-dawn infancy of the colonial experience to the present-day meridian of the American Republic!

I am grateful for the Divine hand that delivered me, in my infancy to my home in West Virginia. I am grateful for wear-worn shoes; for the callouses of honest labor; and for the challenges of an unforgiving terrain. I am thankful for wrong turns that led to the right paths; for good people who inspired me to strive for great things; and for the rich experiences that taught me the difference between knowledge and wisdom.

I am grateful to the people of West Virginia for placing their trust in this adopted son of a poor coal miner, a mere "scrap boy" who used to go door to door gathering bits of food to fatten up the hogs raised by my foster father in a pen by the railroad tracks.

I am grateful to the people for giving me the opportunity to serve our state and our nation; to stand in the midst of history, among men and women who have changed the course of destiny, at the pinnacle of power in the greatest legislative body ever to grace the Earth.

And I am grateful to the people for their many kindnesses to Erma, my wife of 64 years, to whom I owe so much. She has been God's greatest gift to me.

West Virginians have given so much to me. Without your faith in me, I do not know where I would be today, but one thing I do know: I would not be here.

Never having forgotten my roots, I continue to be aware that my highest duty is to West Virginia and to the people of our state, who have honored me with public office for more than a half century.

My own less-than-modest beginning and the poverty of my state during my boyhood years have never faded from my view, and it has been my constant desire to improve the lives of the people who sent me to Washington. In many ways, I think that I have succeeded, but there is still work to do.

I am blessed to have had at my side a wife who, for 64 years, has been the central pillar of my home and my career. Erma and I grew from childhood to adulthood during the years of the Great Depression and in the coal